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Peking Base in Paris

By Harry B. Ellis
Chief of the Paris Bureau of
The Christian Science MonitorSlick Voice

Paris
In a large apartment on the fashionable Rue Francois Premier, not far from the House of Labor, the Chinese Communists have headquartered a massive propaganda effort reaching out to the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and the United States.

At No. 49 of this street, in the heart of Paris near the Champs Elysees, the visitor asks the concierge for the apartment of Jacques Verges, a well-known international Communist and cultural director of the French and English language editions of Revolution, a slick paper monthly magazine committed to the Chinese Communist point of view.

Gibson's Role

Ahead of me on the stairs two Chinese men disappeared through the unlocked door of the Verge apartment. Inside, a room crisscrossed high with posters of revolutions and world maps, pictures of Mao Tse-tung, and Ho Chi Minh. I was greeted by a young American, Richard Gibson.

For the overall direction of Revolution, Gibson is in charge of the French language edition of Revolution. He is also the spokesman of both editions. The floor of the apartment is decorated, along the walls, with maps of Pakistan, Albania, Cuba, Zanzibar, Guinea, Algeria, Venezuela, Laos, and Dien Vietnam, Has-

san Road of the United Arab Republic, and Castro in Silva of Angola.

Mr. Gibson now is Foreign Minister of the new revolutionary government of Zanzibar. An editorial footnote in the latest French issue of Revolution sends him the warm congratulations of his editorial colleagues and wishes him and the "people of Zanzibar new success in the struggle against feudalists and neocolonialists."

The English edition of Revolution is printed in Switzerland, presumably at the modern printing plant which the Chinese Communist Government recently bought at Bern. The magazine is in its ninth monthly issue and has reached a circulation, according to Mr. Gibson, of about 6,900 copies.

Of this monthly total the Chinese Communists buy 3,600 copies, distributing them throughout English-speaking Africa. About 1,900 copies go to the island of Zanzibar.

Nigeria also receives many copies, Mr. Gibson said, but Ghana none, for the reported reason that periodic distribution in that country is hampered by the London Daily Mirror and Revolution has not been able to crack the distribution circuit.

Printed in Paris

Apart from the 6,900 copies taken by the Chinese Communists, 600 subscribers in Egypt buy Revolution. About 1,500 copies go to the United States, primarily to student groups in southern cities. This would imply a Negro readership.

Mr. Verges is variously reported to have been born in Reunion Island, a French overseas department in the Indian Ocean, or in Thailand, or a Creole father and Vietnamese mother. Mr. Verges's brother Paul, also a Communist, was defeated for a seat in the French National Assembly by former French Premier Michel Debre in a by-election on Reunion Island in May, 1963.

The French language edition of Revolution, a larger and slicker presentation than its counterpart in English, is printed in Paris and has a circulation of 17,000-19,000 cop-

ies, asserted to be larger than any other left-wing publication in France.

The Chinese Communist Mr. Gibson said, buy no copies of this edition. But inside the cover of the February, 1964 issue (No. 6), subscribers are offered, free, a weekly summary of Chinese Communist news called "Peking Information." Also offered free of charge are any or all of some 60 titles of books and other publications published in the French language at Peking.

Neither edition of Revolution carries advertising, except of other Communist publications friendly to Peking. A copy of either edition costs 75 cents, or its equivalent in other currencies. Given the quality of their printing and small circulation, both editions must be heavily subsidized.

Spanish Edition

Mr. Gibson asserted that no one party dictated the editorial line of Revolution, though the magazine agreed with the Chinese Communist position in "current disputes." The magazine would be considered an intruder by the Soviet-orientated French Communist Party.

Now in the advanced-planning stage are a Spanish edition, to be printed in Paris and aimed primarily at Latin America, and an Italian quarterly edition, to be printed in Italy. Both are scheduled to appear this year. A German language edition "probably" to be printed in the future, also is planned, according to Mr. Gibson.

Articles in the latest English language Revolution include "The Class Struggle in Africa," "What Kind of Independence for Angola?" "Support the Panamanian People's Just Struggle," and "The Meaning of Black Revolt in the U.S.A." Appearing in the February issue of the French "Revolution" are "15 Days With the Venezuelan Maquis," "Songs of Revolt in South Africa," "Spain in Movement," "Pakistan: the Garden of American Aids," and others.

On the ground floor of the Verges apartment building is a shop selling expensive furs. Across the street is Dior, an ultimate symbol of capitalism. A few doors away is the Norwegian Embassy.